THE REVISED VERSION OF GROSSETESTE'S TRANSLATION OF THE NICOMACHEAN ETHICS*

A. State of the question

The story begins with E. Franceschini. At the 9th « Congresso Nazionale di Filosofia » held at Padua in September 20–23, 1934, the famous Italian scholar presented a report on the studies that had been undertaken in the framework of the international project launched a few years before by the « Union Académique Internationale » under the title of « Aristoteles Latinus »[1]. In the general enthusiasm provoked by the ambitious plan of editing all the medieval Latin translations of Aristotle, the University of Padua, to which Franceschini belonged, had taken charge of the edition of the different versions of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Accordingly, in his survey of the results obtained by scientific research on this work, he could add an important new fact, viz. that Grosseteste's version had been slightly altered by William of Moerbeke. The question had been raised incidentally in an article on the topic by Mgr. Pelzer, but the answer of the Scriptor of the Vatican library, based on soundings of the text that accompanies the printed commentary of Thomas Aquinas, had been negative[2]. Franceschini, on the contrary, was convinced that a careful examination of the entire treatise in various manuscripts would bring to light the rather sober but undisputable corrections done by the Flemish translator[3].

Evidence of this assertion was given by the Paduan scholar in an article published in 1936[4]. It consisted of a discussion of 67 passages of the *Ethics,* for which the author parallelled the Greek text (with its relevant

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* I thank Gordon Wilson, who was so kind to read this paper, for his corrections and critical remarks.

1 FRANCESCHINI, E., « Aristotele nel Medioevo Latino ». Estratto dagli *Atti del IX Congresso Nazionale di Filosofia, Padova, 20–23 Settembre 1934* (XII). Padova, Typografia del Seminario, 1935, XIII–19 pp.

2 PELZER, A., « Les versions latines des ouvrages de morale conservés sous le nom d'Aristote en usage au XIII^e siècle », in *Revue néoscolastique de philosophie,* 23 (1921), pp. 316–341 ; 378–412, esp. p. 404 (= PELZER, A. [†], *Études d'histoire littéraire sur la scolastique médiévale*. Recueil d'articles mis à jour à l'aide des notes de l'auteur par A. PATTIN et E. VAN DE VYVER. Louvain, Publications Universitaires — Paris, Béatrice–Nauwelaerts, 1964, pp. 120–187, esp. p. 178).

3 FRANCESCHINI, E., *Op. cit.,* p. 13.

4 FRANCESCHINI, E., « S. Tomaso e l'Etica Nicomachea », in *Rivista di filosofia neo–scolastica,* 28 (1936), pp. 313–328 (= FRANCESCHINI, E., *Scritti di Filologia latina medievale.* Padova, Editrice Antenore, 1976, II, pp. 615–636) ; cf. *Aristoteles Latinus.* Codices descr. G. LACOMBE e. a., I. Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1939, p. 70, n. 4.

variant readings), Grosseteste's version, the so–called Moerbeke version and the evidence of Thomas Aquinas' commentary. It was obvious that a revision of Grosseteste's version had in fact taken place, and that Thomas' commentary was based mainly, though not exclusively, on this revision. Franceschini stated that the corrections were less relevant in the first three books (in which Grosseteste's version was already a revision of an earlier translation), but more important in the other ones. In his opinion there could be no doubt about the identity of the author of these corrections, viz. William of Moerbeke, although he had found no specific testimony in favour of this translator : his view relied entirely on the evidence of the commentary, which seemed to imply that the revision had been done in Thomas' interest and at Thomas' request. Moreover, this revision had to be dated between the *De veritate,* in which Aquinas used exclusively Grosseteste's version, and the commentary on the *Ethics,* i.e., according to Franceschini, between 1259 and 1266, which was precisely the period of William's most intensive activity as a translator of Aristotle.

The position defended by the Italian scholar found at once general support. F. Pelster even enhanced the plausibility of Moerbeke's authorship by stressing the point that the specimens recorded by Franceschini conformed with the specific vocabulary of the Flemish translator[5]. The idea of a « Recensio Moerbekana » had been welcomed from the beginning by Mgr. Mansion[6], and Mgr. Grabmann was favourably enclined as well[7]. The only sceptic sound, at that time, was uttered by L.W. Keeler, who suggested that the questioned recension could have come about gradually by contamination of Grosseteste's version with some of the translator's *Notulae* and other glosses[8]. Although this view totally missed the point, it drew attention on some specific features of the revision, which required further investigation[9].

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5 PELSTER, F., Review of FRANCESCHINI's article, in *Scholastik,* 12 (1937), p. 438.

6 MANSION, A., « Quelques travaux récents sur les versions latines des *Éthiques* et d'autres ouvrages d'Aristote », in *Revue néoscolastique de philosophie,* 39 (1936), pp. 78–94, esp. pp. 85–87 ; ID., « La version médiévale de l'*Éthique à Nicomaque*. La *Translatio Lincolniensis* et la controverse autour de la revision attribuée à Guillaume de Moerbeke », in *Revue néoscolastique de philosophie,* 41 (1938), pp. 401–427.

7 GRABMANN, M., *Guglielmo di Moerbeke O.P. il traduttore delle opere di Aristotele* (Miscellanea Historiae Pontificiae, XI). Roma, Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1946, pp. 105–111.

8 KEELER, L.W., « The Vulgate Text of St. Thomas's Commentary on the Ethics », in *Gregorianum,* 17 (1936), pp. 413–436, esp. pp. 429–431 ; ID., « The Alleged Revision of Robert Grosseteste's Translation of the Ethics », in *Gregorianum,* 18 (1937), pp. 410–425.

9 FRANCESCHINI, E., « La revisione Moerbekana della *Translatio Lincolniensis* dell'*Etica Nicomachea* », in *Rivista di filosofia neo–scolastica,* 30 (1938), pp. 150–162 (= FRANCESCHINI, E., *Scritti,* II, pp. 637–653) ; MANSION, A., « La version médiévale », pp. 404–417.

The activities of the Aristoteles Latinus project were drastically interrupted by the second world war, and many works that had started before 1940 were never continued afterwards. In 1960 the *Nicomachean Ethics* was entrusted to Father Gauthier, the author of a remarkable study on this work[10] : the result was a splendid edition in five fascicles, published in 1972–1974[11].

On the basis of a careful scrutiny of almost the entire manuscript tradition and of the old printed editions, Gauthier described the specific properties of the « Recensio Recognita » (R), which appeared to be the most prevalent of all medieval versions of the *Ethics,* as follows[12]. (1) The different branches of the tradition, i.e. the manuscripts dependent on the four *exemplaria* of Paris (*Rp*^{1,2,3,4}) and one independent copy preserved at the Cathedral Library of Toledo (*Rt*), have one common source, viz. a revision of the *Liber Ethicorum* by one and the same scholar ; (2) this revision, however, was not operated on the pure text of the « Translatio Lincolniensis » (L^1), but on a copy of a certain version of it (L^2), composed by a scribe ignorant of Greek, and containing, apart from numerous mistakes, some of Grosseteste's *Notulae*. It was apparently this component of the « Recensio Recognita » that led L.W. Keeler astray[13]. Many variant readings of R do not stem from the revisor, but were already present in his copy of L^2 and persisted in R either as real mistakes that escaped his attention, or simply as equivalents that did not need correction. The distinction between such variants and genuine corrections could be made only after the existence of version L^2 had been established. Reversely, it can be inferred that some readings that R has in common with L^1 are in fact the revisor's corrections, viz. when L^2 at those passages deviates from L^1. (3) The revisor wrote down his corrections between the lines or in the margins of the copy of version L^2 he had at hand ; (4) for this work, he had access to the Greek text, as is evidenced by two remarks in which he expressly refers to his Greek sources. In V 7.1132a4, with respect to Grosseteste's words *ad nocumenti (differentiam)* = πρὸς τοῦ βλάβους (τὴν διαφορὰν), he adds the note *in greco ante nocumentum,* which adduces the Greek variant πρὸ τοῦ βλάβους, and in V 8.1133b1, where Grosseteste had overlooked the Greek particle οὐ, he states, after having inserted *non,* that he did so *secundum duos libros grecos*. So at least at this passage, the revisor inspected two Greek manuscripts, and

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[10] GAUTHIER, R.A., *L'Éthique à Nicomaque*. Introduction, traduction et commentaire. Louvain, Publications Universitaires — Paris, Béatrice–Nauwelaerts, 2 vol., 1958–1959, rev. ed. 1970.

[11] *Aristoteles Latinus,* XXVI, 1–3 (quinque fasciculi), *Ethica Nicomachea,* ed. R.A. GAUTHIER. Leiden, E.J. Brill — Bruxelles, Desclée de Brouwer, 1972–1974, esp. fasciculus primus, Praefatio, pp. VII–VIII (Procemium by L. MINIO–PALUELLO).

[12] *Ibid.,* Praefatio, pp. CCXXXI–CCXXXIX.

[13] GAUTHIER, R.A., *L'Éthique à Nicomaque,* I, 1958, p. 81*, n. 242.

probably no more than two, as the particle concerned seems to be unquestioned in the Greek tradition.

After having specified the nature of the revised version of Grosseteste's translation, Gauthier examines the question of its author[14]. He carefully distinguishes between the external and the internal arguments that have been put forward in favour of William of Moerbeke. The external evidence amounts to the tradition according to which the Flemish Dominican translated all the books of Aristotle on physical and moral philosophy from Greek into Latin « ad instantiam fratris Thome ». That this tradition is nothing but a pious legend has been demonstrated convincingly by Gauthier on different occasions[15]. So the proof of Moerbeke's authorship totally rests, here as in some other cases, on internal grounds, but with respect to the *Nicomachean Ethics* these grounds are not easy to find. As we have seen, the revisor's interventions are very sober ; they often do not constitute real corrections, but rather alternative readings, sometimes introduced by the particle *vel,* which expressly leaves the choice to the reader. On the whole, the revision marks are very few in number as compared with some other recensions, in which Moerbeke's hand is evident[16]. Such facts should put us on our guard, Gauthier says, especially in view of the general presumption, according to which William of Moerbeke was the only revisor of Aristotle's translations in the 13th century. Moreover, the « Recensio Recognita » would have to be dated to about 1260–1270, i.e. after the formation of L^2 and before *De unitate intellectus,* in which Thomas used the revision for the

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[14] *Ethica Nicomachea,* Praefatio, pp. CCXXXIX–CCXLV.

[15] Cf. SANCTI THOMAE DE AQUINO *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* (Opera omnia ..., XLVII, 1). Romae, Ad Sanctae Sabinae, 1969, Praefatio, pp. 232*–234* and 264*–265*. — A vivid picture of the debate is to be found in STEEL, C., « Guillaume de Moerbeke et saint Thomas », in *Guillaume de Moerbeke. Recueil d'études à l'occasion du 700e anniversaire de sa mort (1286),* éd. par J. BRAMS et W. VANHAMEL. Leuven, University Press, 1989, pp. 57–82. Steel tries to restore the edifying story about the collaboration between the two members of the Dominican Order, but he must admit that he can adduce no definite proof. « Les données manquent pour pouvoir parler d'une véritable collaboration entre les deux hommes » (p. 81). With Gauthier I would like to stress that, since external evidence is vitiated by legend, Moerbeke's authorship with respect to the *Nicomachean Ethics* can only be proved on internal grounds. Reversely, if such a proof can in fact be adduced, it does not imply that the revision was done in the interest and at the request of Thomas Aquinas ; see my article « Mensch und Natur in der Übersetzungsarbeit Wilhelms von Moerbeke », in *Mensch und Natur im Mittelalter* (Miscellanea Mediaevalia, 21), hg. von A. ZIMMERMANN und A. SPEER, 2. Halbband, Berlin–New York, Walter de Gruyter, 1992, pp. 537–561, in which I tried to understand William's activity as a translator from a different point of view, viz. his own scientific interests.

[16] Cf. MINIO-PALUELLO, L., « Henri Aristippe, Guillaume de Moerbeke et les traductions latines médiévales des *Météorologiques* et du *De generatione et corruptione* d'Aristote », in *Revue philosophique de Louvain,* 45 (1947), pp. 206–235, esp. p. 231 (= MINIO-PALUELLO, L., *Opuscula. The Latin Aristotle.* Amsterdam, A.M. Hakkert, 1972, pp. 57–86, esp. p. 82).

first time, the *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* having been composed, according to Gauthier, in 1271–1272 ; about that time others could have performed the work that has been attributed to William of Moerbeke.

After these preliminary remarks, Gauthier sums up the Latin equivalents found in the « Recensio Recognita » for 41 relevant Greek words belonging to different classes ; these equivalents are compared with those found for the same Greek words in other translations, whether their authors are known or not. It thus appears that in 27 cases the revisor of Grosseteste's translation of the *Ethics* uses an equivalent that also occurs in Moerbeke, whereas in nine cases no parallel could be found in William's translations that were available to Gauthier ; in five cases the « Recensio Recognita » has two Latin equivalents of a specific Greek word, only one of which is recorded for the Flemish translator. This result does not convince the editor of the *Ethics* of William's authorship. In his view, the fact that the questioned revisor agrees more frequently with this translator than with others can be explained by the greater number of Moerbeke's works that have been edited, some of which, moreover, are to be dated to about the same time and treat about the same subjects as the *Ethics,* especially the *Politics* and *Rhetoric*.

B. Position

In what follows I will try to show (I) that there is nothing to prevent our ascribing the disputed text to the Flemish Dominican, and (II) that on the contrary, some of its characteristics seem to argue positively for the authorship of our translator.

I. Let us begin with Gauthier's main objection, viz. that although in (27+5=) 32 cases Moerbeke confirms the or a Latin equivalent occurring in the « Recensio Recognita » of the *Ethics* for a specific Greek word, in (9+5=) 14 cases he does not : ἄρα *certe* ; γαλῆ *catulus* ; δαπάνη *consumptio* ; δή *igitur* ; διότι *propter quid* ; ἐμμελής *prudens* ; θεμιστεύω *dispono* ; θητικός *obsequiosus* ; ἱκανῶς (περίεργοι) *nimis (distractivi)*[17] ; μοχθηρός *perversus* ; πορίζω *invenio* ; προπέτεια *prevolatio* ; τίμημα *pretium* ; χρῆσις *oportunitas*.

1. First of all it can be argued that Gauthier's objection is weakened by the fact that some Latin equivalents he mentions as being unusual do occur in Moerbeke's translations which were edited afterwards : δή *igitur*

[17] The Latin equivalent *distractivus* (for περίεργος) is not taken into consideration by Gauthier, as he suspects a variant reading in the Greek text. In my view, there is no reason for suspicion, as will be made clear at once.

in Simplicius *In Categorias*[18], Archimedes[19], and the *Metaphysics,* διότι *propter quid* in the *Rhetoric*[20] and the *Metaphysics,* and χρῆσις *oportunitas* in the *Metaphysics*[21]. As for the other disputed equivalents, I have not been able to trace them in Moerbeke's translations ; they are somewhat exceptional and occur only once in the « Recensio Recognita », but they are certainly not unusual if considered in their context. That medieval translators practise a word for word method does not imply that they do their job in a purely mechanical way. When confronted with an existing translation, they are influenced, as is natural, by the vocabulary used in it[22]. Although in certain cases the changes in terminology made by the revisor seem to be rather mechanical, as in the case of particles (cf. δή, διότι), in other cases his corrections are provoked by a critical position with respect to the adequacy of the former version. This will appear from a brief review of the disputed passages.

— ἄρα *certe* I 1.1095a1 : καθ' ἕκαστον ἄρα ὁ πεπαιδευμένος : Secundum unumquodque igitur eruditus *om.* L^2 : Secundum unumquodque certe eruditus R — The revisor did not change *igitur* into *certe* : since in his copy, which belonged to version L^2, the words *Secundum — eruditus* were missing, he had to fill this lacuna. In his Greek text he probably read or conjectured ἆρα ; he possibly borrowed the Latin equivalent for this word from Grosseteste, who used it in I 4.1096b27 and III 4.1112a15, or rather

.i. certe

from the « Ethica Nova », which reads *ara* in I 1.1094a22. In the *Metaphysics,* Moerbeke uses *profecto* for ἆρα (VIII 4.1044b4).

— γαλῆ *catulus* VII 6.1149a8 : ὁ δὲ τὴν γαλῆν ἐδεδίει διὰ νόσον : hic autem mustelam timuit propter egritudinem L^2 : hic autem iniuste catulum timuit propter egritudinem *Rp* — The Latin equivalent for τὴν γαλῆν is not *catulum,* but *iniuste*

catu(m)

catulum, which is apparently a corruption of *mustelam.* So the revisor probably wrote above the word *mustelam* : *cat(t)u(m),* which is Moerbeke's usual, though mistaken, translation (γαλῆ = mustela = weasel). Maybe the correction was not clear ; it is omitted in *Rt.*

— δαπάνη *consumptio* IV 1.1120a8 : χρῆσις δ' εἶναι δοκεῖ χρημάτων δαπάνη καὶ δόσις : Usus autem esse videtur pecuniarum sumptus et datio L^2 : Usus autem esse videtur

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[18] ed. PATTIN, A. (Corpus Latinum Commentariorum in Aristotelem Graecorum, V, 2). Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1975, vol. 2, p. 650.

[19] CLAGETT, M., *Archimedes in the Middle Ages,* vol. II, part III. Philadelphia, The American Philosophical Society, 1976, p. 674.

[20] ed. SCHNEIDER, B. (Aristoteles Latinus, XXXI, 1–2). Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1978, p. 389.

[21] ed. VUILLEMIN–DIEM, G. (Aristoteles Latinus, XXV, 3.2), forthcoming, pp. 367, 370, 426.

[22] This phenomenon is very apparent in Moerbeke's revision of the *Metaphysics.* In the « Translatio Anonyma » the common equivalent of the Greek φορά is *ferentia.* In an earlier version of his revision Moerbeke adopted this term as an emendation of the inapt *convehibile* in XII 8.1074a28, whereas in the definitive version he introduced his usual equivalent *latio* ; cf. VUILLEMIN–DIEM, G. (ed.), *Op. cit.,* p. 425.

pecuniarum consumptio et datio R — *sumptus* belongs also to Moerbeke's vocabulary (cf. *Rhetoric* I 4.1360a12), so from this point of view there was no reason for change (if he was the author of R). However, in this context, it is not an adequate rendering (or even a misleading one because of the connotation of « taking ») : *consumptio* is a better expression for the *usus* of money, but it is still influenced by the former version. In IV 2.1120b27 Grosseteste uses the adequate expression *consumptionibus* in a similar context, but there the revisor changes into *expensis,* which is Moerbeke's usual translation.

— ἐμμελής *prudens* IV 14.1128a1 : δοκεῖ καὶ ἐνταῦθα εἶναι ὁμιλία τις ἐμμελής : videtur et hic esse collocutio quedam consona L^2R — The revisor did not change L^2, but only put in the margin the note : *vel societas quedam prudens,* preserved in *Rt. societas* (for ὁμιλία) conforms with Moerbeke's terminology ; *prudens* can have been borrowed from Grosseteste, who used it in IV 13.1127b8, and translated ἐμμελῶς twice before by *prudenter.*

— θεμιστεύω *dispono* X 10.1180a28 : θεμιστεύων παίδων ἠδ' ἀλόχου : themisteuon puerorum et uxoris L^2 : disponens de pueris et uxoribus R — Version R is very akin to Moerbeke's translation of the only parallel of this Homeric citation (*Politics* I 2.1252b22 : *leges statuit ... pueris et uxoribus*), whereas Grosseteste's rendering is rather poor.

— θητικός *obsequiosus* IV 8.1125a2 : διὸ καὶ πάντες οἱ κόλακες θητικοὶ : Propter quod et omnes blanditores serviles L^2R — This case is analogous to that of ἐμμελής *prudens* : *obsequiosi* is an alternative equivalent for θητικοὶ, written in the margin as it is still in *Rt,* whereas in *Rp* it slipped into the text ; the author of R hesitated. A similar doubt occurs in *Rhetoric* I 9.1367a31, where Moerbeke in his first draft translated the Greek word into *deiectus,* but afterwards into *vilis.*

— ἱκανῶς περίεργος *nimis distractivus* IX 10.1170b26 : οἱ πλείους δὴ τῶν πρὸς τὸν οἰκεῖον βίον ἱκανῶς περίεργοι καὶ ἐμπόδιοι πρὸς τὸ καλῶς ζῆν : Plures utique eorum que (?qui) ad propriam vitam sufficienter (?–tes) perscrutatores et impeditivi ad bene vivere L^2 : plures utique quam qui ad propriam vitam nimis (minus *Rp*) distractivi et impeditivi ad bene vivere R — Grosseteste's translation is quite insufficient in this passage : first he did not understand the comparative function of the genitive τῶν, second the expression *sufficienter perscrutatores* does not make sense. In both respects the reviser did a good job ; as regards περίεργοι he realized that it must have the same negative connotation as ἐμπόδιοι, so he modelled on *impeditivi* the word *distractivi* (what distracts our attention from the good life). In a similar way, in the *Politica imperfecta* Moerbeke interprets περιεργότερον as *curiosius.* The rendering of ἱκανῶς with *nimis* depends on this interpretation : it only makes explicit what is implied in the Greek text.

— μοχθηρός *perversus* VIII 12.1160b19 : ἥκιστα δὲ μοχθηρόν ἐστιν ἡ δημοκρατία : Minimum autem malum est democratia L^2 : Minime autem perversum est democratia *Rt* : Minimum [enim pretio] autem malum est democratia *Rp* (the phrase *enim pretio* belongs to the former sentence ; cf. *infra,* τίμημα pretium) — Version *Rt* is more precise. As for William of Moerbeke, he uses various Latin equivalents for μοχθηρός : *pestilens* in the *Politica imperfecta* I 5.1254a39, *pravus* in the *Metaphysics* V 14.1020b23 and in the *Politics* VI 5.1320a34 and VI 8.1322a24, *malus* in the *Rhetoric* I 10.1368b15.

— πορίζω *invenio* IX 1.1164a1 : ἐνταῦθα μὲν οὖν πεπόρισται κοινὸν μέτρον τὸ νόμισμα : Hic quidem igitur tributa est communis mensura nummisma L^2 : Hic quidem igitur

inventa est communis mensura nummisma R — Once more the author of R has a translation *ad sensum* which is much better than Grosseteste's. Did he remember the passage III 5.1112b26 of the « Ethica Vetus » ? In a similar way, Moerbeke translates πορίζω with *facio* in *De partibus animalium* 659a10.

— προπέτεια *prevolatio* VII 8.1150b19 : ἀκρασίας δὲ τὸ μὲν προπέτεια τὸ δ' ἀσθένεια : Incontinentie autem hoc quidem irrefrenatio hoc autem debilitas L^2 : Incontinentie autem hoc quidem prevolatio hoc autem debilitas R — With the term *prevolatio* R is in agreement with the passage III 10.1116a7, where *prevolantes* (=προπετεῖς) goes back to the « Ethica Vetus » (and Grosseteste). Simultaneously with this correction, the author of R added the alternative equivalent *(vel) precipitium,* preserved in *Rt,* which is typical for Moerbeke.

— τίμημα *pretium* VIII 12.1160b19 : καὶ ἴσοι πάντες οἱ ἐν τῷ τιμήματι : et equales omnes qui in honoratione L^2R — The phrase *enim pretio* in the next sentence of *Rp* (cf. *supra,* μοχθηρός *perversus*) has been justly identified by Gauthier as a corruption of *in pretio* (or rather *vel in pretio*), this being an alternative equivalent for *in honoratione,* which slipped from the margin into the text (but out of place). Maybe the author of R was influenced by Grosseteste, who has the same word in VIII 12.1160a33. In the *Rhetoric,* this word and its derivatives *appretio* and *pretiosus* are in Moerbeke's pen for τιμή, τιμάω, τίμιος.

2. Next, it should be emphasized that Gauthier's argument against Moerbeke's authorship is not very decisive, as it is based on the assumption that the translator's vocabulary will have remained unchanged during some period of time, thus permitting to be used in more than one translation. This assumption is not confirmed by recent inquiry. On the contrary, William's terminology is subject to variation, and this variety does not occur at random, but along certain chronological lines[23]. It has been observed, e.g., that his early translations display some peculiarities that are unusual in his later works. Thus the expression *at vero,* which is Moerbeke's common equivalent for ἀλλὰ μήν in most of his translations, is completely absent from his earliest works, whereas the equivalents we find there, i.e. *sed adhuc, sed et, sed tamen, insuper,* do not occur in his later versions[24]. As regards particularly the terminology seized upon by Gauthier, I already mentioned that some of the Greek words concerned have rather unusual equivalents in Moerbeke's earlier works as well : ἆρα *profecto,* θητικός *deiectus, vilis,* περιεργότερον *curiosius,* πορίζω *facio* ; other examples of equivalents that are not used in his later works are ἐμμελής *contractus* (*Politica* VII 6.1327b15), ἐμμελέστερον *melius* (*De caelo* II 1.284b3), ἐμμελῶς *allicienter* (*De caelo* II 9.290b30), and προπετής *proclivus* (*De partibus animalium* IV 12.695a25).

From these examples it appears that Moerbeke's authorship for a given translation or revision cannot be questioned by the occurence of

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[23] Cf. BOSSIER, F., « Méthode de traduction et problèmes de chronologie », in *Guillaume de Moerbeke,* pp. 257–294.

[24] *Ibid.,* pp. 272–274.

some isolated equivalents he does not use anywhere else[25]. Father Gauthier seems to hold that the problem of authorship can be decided by the argument of terminological variety rather than that of similarity ; in his view, terminological likeness will naturally occur once a sufficient number of translations done by various authors comes to be known. This position might be disputed. Terminological coincidences between different translators will of course increase in number in proportion to the mass of texts available, but such similarities will be occasional rather than systematic. The better various authors come to be known, the more their systematic differences will become evident as well as their occasional similarities. On the other hand, the terminological system that characterizes the works of a specific translator does not exclude the possibility of occasional exceptions to the rule. So when we compare some texts that are partly similar and partly different in terminology, we should determine which of both characteristics, variety or similarity, is systematic and which is merely occasional.

II. After having shown that the differences between the « Recensio Recognita » of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and Moerbeke's works are rather exceptional, and can be ascribed either to the influence of the text being revised or to an evolution of the translator's terminological preferences, let us consider, then, the points of similarity between them.

1. The most conclusive evidence of a translator's identity is usually gathered from an analysis of his preferences with respect to particles and syntactical terms[26]. In the « Recensio Recognita » of the *Nicomachean Ethics* most of the equivalents of this kind fit in with Moerbeke's terminology[27] :

> ἄν utique ; ἄρα ergo ; ἆρα utrum ; αὐτός ipse ; γάρ enim ; δέ autem ; δή igitur, itaque, utique ; δῆλον palam ; δηλονότι videlicet ; διότι propter quid (cf. *supra,* p. 50) ; εἰκός verisimile ; ἐπεί cum, quoniam ; ἔτι adhuc ; ἤ quam, aut, vel, sed III 3.1111a29 (no

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[25] Cf. PELSTER, F., Review of M. GRABMANN, *Mittelalterliche lateinische Übersetzungen von Schriften der Aristoteles-Kommentatoren Johannes Philoponos, Alexander von Aphrodisias und Themistios* (München, 1929), in *Theologische Revue,* 29 (1930), cols. 116–119, esp. col. 119 : « Der von G. geltend gemachte Grund, der Übersetzer gebrauchte Wörter, die sich bei W. nicht fänden ... kann nicht durchschlagen ».

[26] Cf. BRAMS, J. und VUILLEMIN-DIEM, G., « *Physica Nova* und *Recensio Matritensis* — Wilhelm von Moerbekes doppelte Revision der *Physica Vetus* », in *Aristotelisches Erbe im arabisch-lateinischen Mittelalter — Übersetzungen, Kommentare, Interpretationen,* hg. von A. ZIMMERMANN (Miscellanea Mediaevalia, 18). Berlin–New York, Walter de Gruyter, 1986, pp. 215–288, esp. pp. 237–251.

[27] Reference is made, for those equivalents that are not mentioned in the article noted above (note 26) nor in Gauthier's Preface, to *De generatione animalium,* ed. H.J. DROSSAART LULOFS (Aristoteles Latinus, XVII, 2.V). Bruges–Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1966, ALEXANDER, *In Meteora,* ed. A.J. SMET (Corpus Latinum Commentariorum in Aristotelem Graecorum, IV). Louvain, Publications Universitaires — Paris, Béatrice–Nauwelaerts, 1968, and SIMPLICIUS, *In Categorias,* ed. A. PATTIN. Exceptions are mentioned explicitly.

parallel ; a « free » correction by Moerbeke or a variant reading [for *sit*] already present in his copy of L^2 ?) ; καίτοι quamvis ; μέντοι tamen ; μήν : οὐ μήν ἀλλὰ insuper et[28] ; ὁ (*demonstrative*) hic, (*article*) (hic, is) qui (est), τῷ + *infin.* per ; οἷον velut ; οἱόσποτε qualiscumque (cf. ὅσποτε quicumque) ; ὁποτέρως qualitercumque ; ὅπως ἄν quomodocumque (cf. ὅπως quomodo) ; ὅσοι quicumque, ὅσον tantum VII 5.1147a8 (no parallel ; a « free » correction by Moerbeke ?) ; ὅσπερ qui quidem, ὅπερ quod vere ; ὅσποτε quicumque (cf. ὅς ἄν quicumque) ; ὁστισοῦν quicumque ; ὅτι quia, quod ; οὖν ergo, igitur ; παρά + *accus.* iuxta (cf. *Metaphysica*), preter ; πότερον utrum ; ταύτῃ hac ; ὡς quam, sicut, tamquam, ut ; ὥστε itaque V 5.1130b16[29], quare, (+ *infin.*) ut + *conj.*, ad + *infin.* VII 9.1151a21 (no parallel ; a correction of « propter » + *infin.*, to which, however, the translator added the « better » equivalent « ut » + *conj.*).

In connection with Moerbeke's rendering of the Greek article, another peculiarity of his method is worth mentioning, particularly with respect to his revisions. When his predecessor translated the passive (sometimes the active) present participle (with or without an article) by the past participle, Moerbeke has the habit of changing into the relative pronoun with the present indicative tense, which is a better equivalent for the Greek present (continuous) form[30]. The same habit can be found in the « Recensio Recognita » of the *Nicomachean Ethics* :

VII 13.1153a2,4 ἀναπληρωμένης : repleta L : que repletur R
VII 15.1154b1 τελειουμένων : perfectis L : hiis qui perficiuntur R
VIII 13.1161a17 δοκοῦντος : existimati L : quod putatur R

A similar case of « truer » rendering of the Greek text is the following :

IV 2.1120b11 οἱ ... κτησάμενοι ... παραλαβόντες : possidentes ... accipientes L : qui acquisierunt ... qui susceperunt R

The simultaneous occurrence of so many purely syntactic similarities between the « Recensio Recognita » of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and Moerbeke's works cannot be conceived of, in my view, as the product of chance, but has to be explained by the identity of their author.

2. This conclusion is confirmed by an analysis of the semantic vocabulary of the « Recensio Recognita ». Suffice it to give a few typical examples[31], in addition to those already mentioned by Gauthier himself.

ἄρχομαι subicior ; βάλλω iacio ; διήκω pertingo, pervenio ; ἐγγύτερον proximius ; ἔξεστι licet ; κρατέομαι dominor ; κτάομαι acquiro ; σύστημα constitutio ; σχῆμα forma ; ὑπείκω cedo ; ὠφελέω prosum.

3. In the series of converging arguments in favour of the authorship of William of Moerbeke, special attention should be paid to the above–

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[28] Cf. also *supra*, p. 52 with note 24.

[29] In this passage, *itaque* is rather the equivalent of the well attested ὥστε than of ὥς, as Gauthier has it.

[30] Cf. VUILLEMIN–DIEM, G., « *Recensio Palatina* und *Recensio Vulgata* — Wilhelm von Moerbekes doppelte Redaktion der Metaphysikübersetzung », in *Aristotelisches Erbe*, pp. 289–366, esp. pp. 323–324.

[31] Reference is made to the editions mentioned in note 27.

mentioned notes in which the revisor of Grosseteste's translation refers to his Greek sources. This procedure is also very typical for Moerbeke[32].

4. It seems to be possible to move still one step ahead. From the alleged parallel passages it appears that the « Recensio Recognita » of the *Nicomachean Ethics,* like Moerbeke's other translations and revisions of Aristotle's works, must be dated in the earliest period of his activity as a translator. Let us recall that the equivalent οὐ μὴν ἀλλά *insuper et* is characteristic of one of his earliest translations, Alexander *In Meteora* (1260). Another typical example is ἀκμή *summum*. This equivalent, as well as its derivatives, only occur, apart from the puzzling ἄκμητος *summus* in Proclus *In Parmenidem*[33], in version 1 of *De generatione animalium, De historia animalium* and Alexander *In Meteora,* which are all to be dated, according to F. Bossier, to about the same time[34]. The equivalent ὥστε *itaque* is another peculiarity of Moerbeke's earlier works[35].

If William of Moerbeke is in fact the revisor of Grosseteste's translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics,* he must have been influenced by his elder contemporary more than by any of the twelfth century translators whose works he revised. It has already been noticed by F. Pelster that, for Moerbeke, Grosseteste's text seems to have served as a model[36], and Mgr. Mansion, in full agreement, says that William's vocabulary has been formed on the basis of the very text he has been revising[37]. It seems that this could be demonstrated fairly well, but it would be the subject of another paper.

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[32] Cf. BRAMS, J., « La *Recensio Matritensis* de la Physique », in *Guillaume de Moerbeke,* pp. 193–220, esp. pp. 204–214.

[33] ed. STEEL, C., tome II. Leuven, University Press, 1985.

[34] Cf. BOSSIER, F., *Op. cit.,* pp. 285–292.

[35] *Ibid.,* pp. 282–284.

[36] PELSTER, F., Review of M. GRABMANN, *Mittelalterliche lateinische Übersetzungen,* col. 117.

[37] « La version médiévale de l'*Éthique à Nicomaque* » (cf. note 6), pp. 415–421.